

# BACKGROUND MEMO

TO: Members of the Press  
FROM: Linden Zakula, Deputy Chief of Staff  
SUBJECT: Republican Rhetoric on Jobs Bill  
DATE: January 19, 2016

**Members of the Press** – Last week, Governor Dayton announced the details of his proposed 2016 Jobs Bill, which would invest over \$1.4 billion in critical infrastructure projects statewide, create an estimated 39,900 jobs in Minnesota, and leverage an additional \$600 million in local, federal, and private investments in Minnesota’s infrastructure. You can access all of our press and reference materials at the following links:

- [News Release](#)
- [Map of Notable Projects](#)
- [List of Projects, By County](#)
- [MMB Explanations of Included Projects](#)
- [Audio of the Governor’s News Conference](#)
- [List of Water-Related Projects](#)
- [More Details on Water-Related Projects](#)

## **GOP Response: Fewer Jobs for Minnesota, Ignore Critical Needs in Minnesota Communities**

No more than 10 minutes after Governor Dayton concluded his news conference Senate **Minority Leader David Hann** – without reviewing the merits of any of the projects included in the Governor’s bill – said the proposal ought to be “[cut in half](#).” He then declined to offer any specifics about what projects he would cut.

**Representative Steve Drazkowski** stopped just short of calling the investments in these Minnesota communities wasteful, issuing a statement that included: “[There is not a dime of spending in this borrow-and-spend proposal that we need. Not a dime.](#)” Representative Tim Miller also [posted on Facebook](#) agreeing with Representative Steve Drazkowski. [Representative Drazkowski opposes every single project in the Governor’s proposal.](#)

Conspicuously absent was **Speaker Kurt Daudt** who has made a habit of avoiding staking out public positions on the important issues facing Minnesotans. Despite being the [elected leader](#) of the [majority party](#) in the House of Representatives, Speaker Daudt declined to state if he supports the projects included in the Governor’s Jobs Bill. These are projects that would build classrooms for our students, provide affordable housing for more Minnesotans, help farmers expand and improve their operations, build water facilities *primarily in Greater Minnesota* that will provide communities affordable and clean water, and create jobs for Minnesotans. Does Speaker Daudt agree with Senator Hann? Does he agree with Representative Drazkowski that we should [fund zero projects](#)?

Since Republicans are following their same old pattern of cherry-picking one or two projects they don't think are necessary – and then declining to state which specific projects they support and which projects they don't – I took the liberty of outlining which communities would be left behind by the Republicans' approach to arbitrarily cut the Governor's proposal in half. **Do they oppose, for example, these projects that add up to \$700 million?**

- \$16 million to finish the Lewis & Clark Regional Water System, connecting communities across southwestern Minnesota to clean, reliable, affordable water
- \$6 million to expand access to dental care in Bemidji
- \$167 million to ensure clean, affordable water in Minnesota communities statewide
- \$70 million for highway rail grade separations in Moorhead, Prairie Island, and Coon Rapids
- \$5 million for better rail grade warning systems on highways
- \$3.5 million for a railway safety training facility at Camp Ripley
- \$33 million for a State Emergency Operations Center to help coordinate responses to natural disasters
- \$135 million in critical classroom and laboratory improvements on MnSCU and University of Minnesota campuses
- \$17 million for an Education Village at Winona State University to train the next generation of Minnesota teachers
- \$90 million to expand access to affordable housing statewide
- \$10 million for port improvements in Winona, Red Wing, Saint Paul, and Duluth
- \$70 million to improve safety at the Minnesota Security Hospital in Saint Peter
- \$19 million to improve safety and security at the St. Cloud Correctional facility
- \$2 million to improve safety and security at the Anoka Metro Regional Treatment Center
- \$35 million to help farmers invest in their land and equipment
- \$8 million for the Minneapolis Veterans Home
- \$8 million to improve facilities that help train our National Guard service members
- \$3.5 million for flood hazard mitigation projects in Greater Minnesota communities

These are communities that could be left behind if Representative Drazkowski, Speaker Daudt, and Senator Hann follow through on their extreme rhetoric. Here are a few additional numbers on what their approach means for Minnesotans – fewer jobs, unmet needs, and more expensive projects later.

**20,000 Fewer Jobs\*** – Cutting the Governor’s proposal in half (by \$700 million) would mean 19,950 fewer jobs for Minnesota.

**81% of Needed Projects Left Unfunded** – A \$700 million bill would only meet 19 percent of the urgent infrastructure needs facing Minnesota communities. The state received over \$3.7 billion in requests from communities for critical infrastructure projects across Minnesota.

**Wasted Opportunity, Higher Costs Later** – Right now, Minnesota has a \$1.2 billion budget surplus, a strong and growing economy, and the capacity to bond for up to \$2 billion. We have historically low interest rates, which make capital investments more affordable for projects that will only cost more – much more – later on. The conservative, responsible choice is to make these investments now, not wait until later, ignoring our state’s critical infrastructure needs and making the problem far more expensive in the long-run. In other words, saving a nickel today will cost us a bundle tomorrow.

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*\*Dr. Stephen Fuller, Faculty Chair and Director of the Center for Regional Analysis at George Mason University. Testimony before Congress on January 22, 2009: His research found that, when there are sufficient unused labor, capital and materials, an additional \$1 billion of investment in nonresidential construction supports or creates 28,500 jobs and adds \$3.4 billion to GDP and \$1.1 billion to personal income. About one-third of the benefit accrues directly to the construction industry. Roughly one-sixth goes to industries that supply materials, services and equipment to the construction project. Fully half of the gain is diffused through the entire economy, as workers and owners in the construction and supplier industries spend their added income on a wide range of goods and services.*